

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A round baler comprising:
 - a frame;
 - sidewalls attached to the frame;
 - a drum roller operatively rotatably attached to the frame;
 - a pick-up mechanism operatively attached to the frame to deliver a crop from the ground to a baling chamber disposed between the sidewalls, and above the drum roller;
 - a plurality of belt rollers rotatably disposed between the sidewalls;
 - one of the belt rollers being disposed behind the drum roller, said one belt roller being the belt roller closest to the drum roller, said one belt roller having a radius;
 - a plurality of belts disposed at least partially between the sidewalls and each of the belts being trained over the belt rollers;
 - a roll of protective material desired to be disposed around the bale after it has been formed, the roll being operatively rotatably attached to the frame, the protective material on the roll being wider than the distance between the sidewalls;
 - a pair of arcuate wedges, one of the arcuate wedges being operatively attached respectively to the sidewalls above each respective end of the drum roller for compressing the lower edges of a bale being formed to form a void to receive edges of the protective material;
 - wherein the distance between the drum roller and said one belt roller is less than the radius of said one belt roller,
 - an inlet for a leading edge of the protective material, formed by a space between the drum roller and the one belt roller, to allow the protective material to be reliably fed to a place in the baling chamber where it can be wrapped around the bale; and
 - a protective material guide member operatively attached to the frame for guiding the protective material from the roll to the inlet.

2. (Original) The baler of claim 1 wherein there are no structures of the baler between the drum roller and said one belt roller except for sections of said belts and the protective material disposed in the inlet.

3. (Previously Presented) A round baler for producing cylindrical bales of a certain length defined by the distance between the inside surfaces of two basically flat panels with a netwrap inlet area configured to accept netwrap material that is wider than the length, the inlet area comprising;

- a) a front side defined by a drum roller with a length approximately equal to the length of the cylindrical bale configured for direct contact with the bale, having no belts between the drum roller and the bale;
- b) a rear side defined by a belt roller with a length approximately equal to the length of the cylindrical bale configured for indirect contact with the bale, having belts between the drum roller and the bale;
- c) first and second sides, spaced apart a distance equal to approximately the length of the cylindrical bale, defined by the flat panels; and
- d) arcuate wedge members operatively attached to the flat panels, said arcuate wedge members being concentric to the drum roller;
- e) wherein the netwrap material contacts the formed bale in a void created by the wedges and in front of the belt roller.

4. (Previously Presented) A baler with a generally cylindrical bale forming chamber with ends defined by panels, a right side panel and a left side panel, and belts routed over rollers extending between the panels for supporting a forming bale such that a lower roller defines a bottom of the bale forming chamber and further including a netwrap mechanism to feed netwrap material to an inlet area located near the bottom of the bale forming chamber, the netwrap mechanism including a feed pan disposed under the belts said feed pan comprising: flexible net guides in a spaced relation to the lower roller that are supported underneath the flexible net guides by a closest cross-member to

the lower roller, which closest lower cross member is spaced no closer than two (2) inches from the lower roller.

5. (Original) The baler of claim 4 wherein the closest cross-member is spaced no closer than ten (10) inches from the lower roller.

6. (Currently Amended) A baler with a generally cylindrical bale forming chamber with ends defined by panels, a right side panel and a left side panel, and belts routed over rollers extending between the panels for supporting a forming bale such that a lower roller defines a bottom of the bale forming chamber, and further including a netwrap mechanism to feed netwrap material to an inlet area located near the bottom, the lower roller having a diameter, the netwrap mechanism including a feed pan comprising;

- f) flexible net guides, ~~that are narrower than the bale forming belts, and~~
having a thickness less than a width; and
- g) supporting cross members, providing support for the flexible net guides;
- h) wherein ~~there are no cross members is nearer in close vicinity to the lower roller~~ than one lower roller diameter.

7. (Previously Presented) A baler with a generally cylindrical bale forming chamber with ends defined by panels, a right side panel and a left side panel, and belts routed over rollers extending between the panels for supporting a forming bale such that a lower roller defines a bottom of the bale forming chamber and further including a netwrap mechanism to feed netwrap material to an inlet area located near the bottom of the bale forming chamber, the netwrap mechanism including a feed pan comprising: flexible net guides in a spaced relation to the lower roller that are supported by a cross-member spaced a minimum horizontal distance from the lower roller equal to the diameter of the lower roller.

8. (Previously Presented) An improvement to a baler with a generally cylindrical bale forming chamber with ends defined by panels, a right side panel and a left side panel, baler forming belts that are routed over rollers extending between the

panels for supporting a forming bale and a pickup for directing crop material into contact with the bale forming belts where it is directed rearward away from the pickup and around the periphery of the forming bale until it eventually returns to the vicinity of the pickup, further including a netwrap assembly for feeding netwrap material into contact with the periphery of a formed bale, the improvement comprising a guide positioned generally above the pickup to direct crop material previously inserted into the bale formation chamber and to direct the netwrap material away from the pickup.

9. (Original) The improvement of claim **8** wherein the guide comprises a generally horizontal rigid plate.

10. (Original) The improvement of claim **9** wherein the guide comprises a plurality of narrow plates.

11. (Original) The improvement of claim **8** wherein the guide comprises a generally vertical flexible plate.

12. (Original) A round baler having a frame and flat bale forming belts for producing cylindrical bales, and a netwrap mechanism for feeding netwrap material from a supply roll comprising:

- a) a net knife fixed with respect to the frame;
- b) a roll of netwrap material disposed on a spindle operatively rotatably attached to the frame;
- c) a brake for selectively applying a braking force to inhibit rotation of the roll of netwrap material;
- b) a net pan operatively pivotally attached to the frame and moveable among a first pan position wherein the netwrap material is routed away from the knife and into contact with the bale forming belts, a second pan position wherein the netwrap material is directed away from the knife, and a third pan position where the netwrap material can contact the knife; and

- c) a driver, including a cross-member, an activator and net spreader roller, that can be moved among three places including a first place wherein the activator rotates the net pan into the first pan position to release a net brake to thereby release tension in the netwrap material; a second place wherein the activator rotates the net pan to its second position and applies the net brake; and a third place where the activator rotates the net pan into its third position, and the cross-member traps the netwrap material against the net knife.

13. (Previously Presented) A round baler for producing cylindrical bales of a certain length defined by a distance between inside surfaces of two basically flat panels with a netwrap inlet area configured to accept netwrap material that is wider than the length, said inlet area comprising;

- a) a front side defined by a drum roller with a length approximately equal to the length of the cylindrical bale configured for direct contact with the bale, that is, with no belts between the drum roller and the bale;
- b) a rear side defined by a belt roller with a length approximately equal to the length of the cylindrical bale configured for indirect contact with the bale, that is, with belts between the belt roller and the bale;
- c) first and second ends, spaced apart a distance approximately equal to the length of the cylindrical bale, defined by the flat panels and arcuate wedge members mounted to the flat panels and that are concentric to the drum roller; and
- d) wherein the arcuate wedge members extend from the front side to the rear side defining a top of the inlet area at the first and second ends.

14. (Previously Presented) A method of engaging netwrap material, stored on a netwrap roll, onto a cylindrical bale inside a bale chamber, said baler comprising a drum roller and a belt roller about which belts for forming the cylindrical bale are wrapped, the drum roller disposed forward of the belt roller, said method comprising:

unrolling the netwrap material from the netwrap roll;
directing the netwrap material operatively around a portion of the belt roller
behind the drum roller;
passing the netwrap material through a region between the drum roller and the
belt roller; and
engaging the netwrap material onto the cylindrical bale.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **14** wherein the baler includes at least one netwrap material guide disposed between the netwrap roll and the belt roller, the method additionally comprising supporting the netwrap material from below with the at least one netwrap material guide as the netwrap material passes from the netwrap roll to the belt roller.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **14** additionally comprising:
installing the belt roller a distance behind the drum roller; and
providing a gap between said belt roller and drum roller less than a diameter of
the belt roller.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **14** wherein the baler includes at least one arcuate wedge member having an upper surface and a lower surface, said at least one arcuate wedge member used for forming a space to allow the netwrap material to engage the cylindrical bale, said method including:

- (a) defining the lower surface of the at least one arcuate wedge member as a circular arc shape concentric with the drum roller; and
- (b) defining the upper surface of the at least one arcuate wedge member as a circular arc shape, a center of said circular arc being to the rear of the baler compared to an axis of rotation of the drum roller;
- (c) truncating the upper and lower surfaces of the at least one arcuate wedge member behind an intersection of the upper surface and the lower surface.

18. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for baling cylindrical bales of crop material, said apparatus comprising:

- (a) a crop pickup assembly for picking up the crop material and delivering said crop material into the baler;
- (b) a drum roller disposed behind the crop pickup assembly;
- (c) a belt roller, over which belts run, disposed behind the drum roller and spaced away from the drum roller; and
- (d) netwrap material disposed between the drum roller and the belt roller.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim **18** additionally comprising:
a netwrap material roll on which netwrap material is stored; and
at least one netwrap material guide disposed between the netwrap roll and the belt roller, said netwrap material guide providing support for the netwrap material from below.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim **19** additionally comprising at least one cross member providing support for the at least one netwrap material guide from below.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim **18** additionally comprising:

- at least one arcuate wedge member for forming a space at an outer edge of the cylindrical bale to allow the netwrap material to engage the cylindrical bale;
- an upper surface of the at least one arcuate wedge member formed as a circular arc shape, a center of said circular arc being toward a rear of the baler compared to an axis of rotation of the drum roller;
- a lower surface of the said at least one arcuate wedge member formed as a circular arc shape concentric with the drum roller; and
- a front edge of the at least one arcuate wedge member located behind a line of intersection of the upper surface and the lower surface.

22. (New) The baler of claim **6** wherein the thickness of the flexible net guides is at least one order of magnitude as thick as the width of the flexible net guides.

23. (New) The baler of claim **6** wherein the cross members are substantially parallel to an axis of rotation of the bale, and are non-rotational.